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WILLIAM WADE/LONDON

EUROPE'S COMMUNISTS -- EAST AND WEST

ANNCR:

WHILE WEST EUROPEANS ARE CONSIDERING THE FUTURE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN ITALY, EAST EUROPEAN COMMUNISTS HAVE A PARALLEL CONTROVERSY OF THEIR OWN. VOA CORRESPONDENT WILLIAM WADE PROVIDES THE DETAILS IN THIS BACKGROUND REPORT FROM LONDON:

VOICE:

A KEY ISSUE FOR WEST EUROPEANS IS WHETHER THE ITALIAN COMMUNISTS AT NEXT MONTH'S ELECTIONS WILL ABIDE BY THE RULES OF PLURALISTIC DEMOCRACY -- WHETHER, FOR INSTANCE THEY MEAN WHAT THEY SAY WHEN THEY SAY THEY ARE WILLING TO BE VOTED OUT OF OFFICE AS WELL AS INTO IT.

IN EASTERN EUROPE, WHERE VOTERS SIMPLY DO NOT GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE A COMMUNIST PARTY OUT OF OFFICE, THE PROBLEM IS PARALLEL BUT DIFFERENT. IT IS WHETHER THE BUSINESS OF APPEALING FOR VOTES IN THE WEST MEANS CHANGES IN THE BUSINESS OF DEFINING AND ENFORCING COMMUNIST ORTHODOXY IN THE EAST. IF ITALIAN AND FRENCH AND SPANISH COMMUNISTS IGNORE SUCH CONCEPTS AS "DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM" AND THE "DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT," WHAT HAPPENS TO COMMUNIST SOLIDARITY IN THE EAST?

MOST WANTED A TWENTY-EIGHT NATION MEETING OF EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES AS EARLY AS 1973 -- PERHAPS TO HELP ERASE MEMORIES OF THE SOVIET-LED OCCUPATION OF CZECHOLSLOVAKIA IN

1968. BUT IT FAILED TO GET OTHER COMMUNIST PARTIES TO MEET DURING 1975 OR BEFORE LAST FEBRUARY'S TWENTY-FIFTH SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS. NOW, EAST GERMANY COMMUNISTS SAY THAT A TWENTY-EIGHT PARTY DRAFTING COMMISSION HAS MADE GREAT PROGRESS IN ITS PREPARATIONS FOR A FULL SCALE CONFERENCE.

ONE MORE COMMISSION SESSION IS PLANNED EARLY NEXT MONTH AND SHORTLY AFTER THAT, PERHAPS BEFORE THE END OF JUNE ACCORDING TO A YUGOSLAV REPORT, THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE IN EAST BERLIN. YUGOSLAVS, FOR INSTANCE, REMAIN SENSITIVE TO OUTSIDE PRESSURES. BELGRADE'S PARTY ORGAN COMMUNIST RECENTLY CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FEDERAL SECRETARY FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS (FRANNO MERLJEVIC) POINTING OUT, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE DANGERS FROM STALINIST AND PRO-COMINFORM EMIGRES. LAST YEAR, HE SAID, FIVE SUCH GROUPS WITH ABOUT ONE HUNDRED MEMBERS WERE UNCOVERED TRYING TO UPSET YUGOSLAVIA'S NON-ALIGNED, INDEPENDENT POLICY.

ROMANIA'S PRESIDENT NICOLAE CEAUSESCU, IN HIS LATEST SPEECH, (MAY 8,) HEWED TO A FAMILIAR THEME. HE STRESSED THE RIGHT OF EACH COMMUNIST PARTY TO WORK OUT ITS POLITICAL LINE INDEPENDENTLY. THAT, IF SAYS, SHOULD BE THE BASIS FOR COOPERATION, UNITY AND PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM. IT IS NOT TOO DIFFICULT TO GET THE WORDS SOLIDARITY AND INDEPENDENCE INTO THE SAME COMMUNIQUE -- THE PROBLEM IS WHAT HAPPENS AFTERWARDS.

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